NEIGHBORHOOD INTEGRITY

Neighborhood integrity is the all-encompassing term for different measures of quality of life in a neighborhood area. These measures include such elements as quality parks, safe roads, property maintenance, and code compliance that all work together to create neighborhood integrity. Neighborhood integrity should be used to build relationships among various groups so that a neighborhood adapts and addresses issues in a proactive and positive manner.

To improve neighborhood integrity, the goal of this chapter is to **identify policies and strategies that will improve neighborhood organizations, property maintenance and City code compliance in owner-occupied areas to elevate the attractiveness of Central College Station's subdivisions as an affordable, family-friendly neighborhood**. Through public input, the residents of Central College Station have highlighted special interests in property maintenance and neighborhood image.

To achieve the stated goal, this chapter focuses on strategies that stabilize and enhance owner-occupied areas within Central College Station. The strategies in this chapter are intended to maintain owner-occupancy in the neighborhood by developing enhanced efforts in owner-occupied areas, while continuing to maintain current service levels in primarily renter-occupied areas. A secondary focus is placed on building stronger neighborhood organizations to effectively address issues that arise between residents.

This chapter outlines some of the key issues facing Central College Station as they relate to neighborhood integrity and outline strategies to meet the goal set by this plan. Information about budget constraints and responsible parties can be found in **Chapter 5**, Implementation.

Planning Areas

In order to effectively plan for enhanced services, the neighborhood has been divided into single-family service provision areas based on subdivision boundaries, types of neighborhood organizations in place, and common issues that face different areas of the neighborhood. Areas with similar issues are grouped together with strategies determined for each group based on the group characteristics.

The identifiers used in this chapter are not a ranking of the different areas in the neighborhoods or a method of designating a preferred area. These identifiers were used to group areas with similar characteristics to best establish service provision models based on the needs of the areas. The purpose for the service delivery model is to tailor specific services to continue to promote home-ownership in existing owner-occupied areas. In addition to these areas, there are also properties that are multi-family, commercial, or not generally associated with a single-family subdivision. These areas will continue to be maintained through existing services, except where they are adjacent to single-family service provision areas. In such cases, enhanced efforts for these properties will be addressed with strategies for the area to which it is adjacent.

Neighborhood Service Provision Areas

Area A
Areas designated "A" have the following characteristics:
- Existing active Homeowners Association
- Low rates of rental properties (more than 95% owner occupied)
- Low rates of property maintenance code cases in the past 5 years
- Shares no borders with rental-occupied areas

Area B
Areas designated "B" have the following characteristics:
- Existing inactive Homeowner's Association
- Higher rates of rental property than area A
- Moderate increase in property maintenance code cases in past 5 years
- May have limited borders with rental-occupied areas

Area C
Areas designated "C" have the following characteristics:
- Existing active Neighborhood Association
- High rates of owner-occupancy
- Low to moderate levels of property maintenance code cases in past 5 years
- Has limited borders with adjacent multi-family or rental property

Area D
Areas designated "D" have the following characteristics:
- Existing active Neighborhood Association
- Moderate to high rates of owner-occupancy
- Moderate rises in property maintenance code cases in past 5 years
- Has increased areas which border adjacent multi-family, rental, or commercial properties

Area E
Areas designated "E" have the following characteristics:
- No existing or known Neighborhood or Homeownership Association
- High rates of owner-occupancy
- Low to moderate rises in property maintenance code cases in past 5 years

Area F
Areas designated "F" have the following characteristics:
- No existing or known Neighborhood or Homeownership Association
- Moderate rates of owner-occupancy with pockets of both high and low rates of rental-occupancy
- Moderate rises in property maintenance code cases in past 5 years

Area G
Areas designated "G" have the following characteristics:
- May or may not have existing neighborhood organization
- High rates of renter-occupied housing
- Moderate to high rates of property maintenance code cases in past 5 years

Each of these areas has specific issues and opportunities to address in order to meet this goal. The adjacent list identifies each of these with a short description of the elements used to group particular areas within the neighborhood. **Map 2.1,** Neighborhood Service Provision Areas provides an illustration of where these areas are located.

Key Planning Considerations

The majority of issues raised by citizens in Central College Station for neighborhood integrity are tied to the impact of renter-occupied properties within and around the neighborhood. Owner-occupiers express concerns with lawn and property maintenance, traffic and parking, as well as behavioral issues with renters that include trash and loud parties.

The combination of limited on-campus housing and market forces in the last decade led to an increase in investor-owned property throughout College Station. The Central College Station area is home to 2,426 apartment and duplex units (52% of all dwelling units in the area), and 14.2% of rented single-family homes within the City (449 units in Central College Station and 3,160 housing units in College Station, respectively). Overall, rental units make up 59% of the housing stock in Central College Station and 20% of the single-family housing stock (See **Existing Conditions Report** for more information about rental properties in this area). **Map 2.2**, Rental Rates by Street illustrates the amount of rental single-family property in the area.

This section is organized into broad categories to address the following issues: Effective Organizations, Proactive Code Enforcement and Property Maintenance, Neighborhood Image, and Emergency and Law Enforcement Services.

Effective Organizations

In considering strategies to strengthen owner-occupancy, this plan identifies neighborhood organizing as a major issue in this area. The success and sustainability of the neighborhood and homeowner associations significantly impacts the future success of any new programs aimed at improving neighborhood integrity in this area. Without

effective partners in the area, new strategies will be difficult to implement and less effective in achieving the goals of this plan.

None of the organizations in this area are particularly engaged in the political process, and have had trouble remaining effective during times when there are not specific issues to rally behind. These characteristics make it increasingly difficult for the organizations to remain a proactive partner in solving neighborhood problems since interest and involvement at the organizational level wanes without a strong focus and agenda.

There are five registered neighborhood organizations in Central College Station representing a variety of different property types. There are four homeowner associations and one neighborhood association (see **Map 2.3,** Existing Neighborhood Organizations).

Neighborhood organizations play a valuable role in helping maintain neighborhood integrity. Registered neighborhood groups receive information from the City relating to development activity in the area, and are eligible for neighborhood matching grants to assist with various projects. Effective neighborhood groups are important to promoting the integrity of a neighborhood in that it provides an existing organizational structure able of effectively and efficiently addressing problems that may arise in and around the neighborhood.

Effective training is necessary to build and improve these organizations in Central College Station. In doing so, the City has additional avenues to help address neighborhood and subdivision level issues and can work to build more effective working relationships with its citizens.

Currently, the City works with neighborhood and homeowner associations through the Neighborhood Partnership Program run by Planning and Development Services through its Neighborhood Services business unit. Registered partners are eligible for small grants, access to special training and seminars, receive updates about development activity in their area, and other support from Neighborhood Services. The Neighborhood Services Coordinator also works closely with Texas A&M University (TAMU) organizations through Aggie-Up, to work directly on student and student-rental issues that impact neighborhoods.

Effective Organization Strategies:

The strategies in the section focus on increasing existing organization capacity and developing new organizations within this area. These strategies outline opportunities to provide new training and activities for neighborhood partnership organizations to increase leadership and

What are Homeowner Associations (HOA) and Neighborhood Association (NA)

A **Homeowner Association**, or HOA, is usually a non-profit entity created to manage the common lands and interests of property owners within a subdivided area. HOAs may have adopted Covenants and Restrictions (or deed restrictions) that encompass property maintenance and development activities allowed on the property within the area governed by the HOA. HOAs are generally governed by an elected executive committee that also works to enforce the deed restrictions. When purchasing a home in an area with an HOA, membership is required as part of the deed unless at some point the HOA is dissolved.

A **Neighborhood Association** is an organization that is also created to manage the interests of property owners within a subdivided area, but does not have the authority to enforce any deed restrictions. Membership in neighborhood associations is voluntary, and these organizations are typically more social in nature than an HOA; however, HOAs may also host social activities in a neighborhood.

participation.

- **Program Continuation (NI1.1) -** Continue to implement strategies and programs in the Strong and Sustainable Neighborhoods Initiative.
- **Realign Neighborhood Partnership Program (NI1.2) -** Realign Neighborhood Partnership program to develop responsibilities for participating organizations to create a true partnership program, i.e., provide regular updates to Neighborhood Services with contact information for the organization, future meetings, next elections, and other pertinent information so that City services can be aligned based on the organizations' schedules and priorities. *(All Areas)*
- **Create More Detailed Online Presence (NI1.3) -** Create an online clearinghouse for neighborhood organization information, ie, contact information, dates and times of meetings, programs, and other pertinent information obtained through the Neighborhood Partnership Program to provide a centralized location for residents to access neighborhood information. *(All Areas)*
- **Realign Neighborhood Partnership Program (NI1.4) -** Utilize the Neighborhood Partnership program to create an organizational mentoring program for additional support to new or struggling organizations. *(All Areas)*
- **Realign Neighborhood Partnership Program (NI1.5) -** Create a civic engagement component to the Neighborhood Partnership program to increase neighborhood participation in local governance. This could include required participation in Citizens University, attending Citizens Police and Fire Academy, or regularly attending City Council or other citizen committee meetings. *(All Areas)*
- **Realign Neighborhood Partnership Program (NI1.6) -** Utilize existing contact information like new residential utility connections to make contact with residents that may be new to the area to promote neighborhood services and online resources. *(All Areas)*
- **Provide Technical Support for New Neighborhood Programs (NI1.7) -** Work with existing organizations to create a Know Your Neighbor campaign to increase active participation in these organizations. This campaign can build on existing programs that encourage neighborhood awareness like National Night Out *(All Areas)*
- **Ongoing evaluation and indicator program (NI1.8) -** Create an ongoing evaluation process of neighborhood characteristics to readjust service provisions and evaluate effectiveness. This should be included as part of a comprehensive indicator program for

Aggie Up

The Aggie Up program was implemented in 2008 as a collaboration between City of College Station, City of Bryan, and Texas A&M University. The group brings representatives from Fire, Police, Code Enforcement, and Neighborhood Services together with TAMU Student Services representatives to address issues relating to off-campus student behavior. This program is responsible for the successful implementation of the Noise Abatement Program, as well as several promotional campaigns to educate students on neighborhood citizenship.

Strong and Sustainable Neighborhood Initiative

The Strong and Sustainable Neighborhood Initiative began in Fall, 2007. The program focuses on the realignment of City services like code enforcement and neighborhood services to support and strengthen local neighborhoods. The program began from policy debates within the community relating to the influx of students and renters in owner-occupied areas. Focus groups with owner-residents, property managers, and students provided insight on several areas where services could be improved to minimize the impacts from student behavior issues. Aggie Up is a program developed from the Strong and Sustainable Neighborhood Initiative.

neighborhoods. *(All Areas)*

- **Provide effective organization support and training opportunities (NI1.9) -** Develop leadership training programs for newly elected HOA officers and committee members. Program should specifically address developing agendas, setting priorities, and establishing communication strategies for those agendas. *(Area A)*

- **Provide effective organization support and training opportunities (NI1.10) -** Provide technical assistance to HOAs for succession planning to allow for successful change of leadership without diminishing organizational capacity. Focus should be placed on assisting with the creation of standard operating procedures and other training documents for newly elected officers. *(Area A)*

- **Provide effective organization support and training opportunities (NI1.11) -** Work with organization leadership to identify and provide technical assistance in recruitment of key leaders in the area to fill vacant leadership positions on existing executive committees. *(Area B)*

- **Provide effective organization support and training opportunities (NI1.12) -** Provide in-depth training similar to the new organization program for reorganized executive committee. *(Area B)*

- **Provide effective organization support and training opportunities (NI1.13) -** Allow use of neighborhood grant funds for neighborhood organizing in these areas when applications are accompanied by a clear and comprehensive organizational strategy outlining how the organization will reach out to its constituents. *(Area B)*

- **Provide effective organization support and training opportunities (NI1.14) -** Develop training on effective deed restriction enforcement. *(Area B)*

- **Provide effective organization support and training opportunities (NI1.15) -** Where there is interest and at or near 100% owner-occupancy, work with residents through the Neighborhood Partnership program to convert the existing neighborhood associations to homeowner associations. *(Area C)*

- **Expand Neighborhood Grant opportunities (NI1.16) -** Allow use of neighborhood grant funding for legal consultations in association with developing covenants and deed restrictions. *(Area C)*

- **Provide effective organization support and training opportunities (NI1.17) -** Create a specific support program for new organizations. This program should focus on providing specific technical assistance to organizations to ensure their viability over time. The program should include an annual meeting schedule and agendas, assistance in the development of a communications plan and strategy, training on how to develop agendas and projects, and specific meetings with City Staff. *(All Areas – Specifically Area D, E, and F)*

- **Provide effective organization support and training opportunities (NI1.18) -** Develop training for communication plan development to make sure organizations are providing pertinent information to their constituents about meetings and events, as well as disseminating announcements from Neighborhood Services. *(Areas A, B, C, & D)*

- **Provide effective organization support and training opportunities (NI1.19) -** Work with residents to develop a new neighborhood organization or incorporate these areas into an existing nearby neighborhood association. *(Areas E & F)*

- **Program Continuation (NI1.20) -** Continue to work with Aggie Up and other TAMU and Blinn College student groups to find proactive methods to reach out to off-campus students. *(Area G)*
- **Program Continuation (NI1.21) -** Continue to identify and utilize opportunities to develop other tenant and property owner associations. *(Area G and other Areas)*

Proactive Code Enforcement and Property Maintenance

Code and property maintenance enforcement play a significant role in the perception of neighborhood integrity. Issues like lawn maintenance, trash around yards, and upkeep on a home play a role in how property owners make decisions about investments for improving their own property.

The City of College Station has minimum requirements regarding how properties should be maintained to meet basic health, safety, and welfare needs. These include standards for the upkeep on structures on the property through the International Building Code, as well as standards for yard maintenance, junk vehicles, parking, and trash in the City's Code of Ordinances. Compliance with these regulations is monitored through a joint effort between Code Enforcement, Police, and residents. Code Enforcement officers visit each property in their area on a weekly basis, but also investigate citizen complaints. College Station's Police Department works closely with Code Enforcement and Neighborhood Services to ensure safety within neighborhood specific areas, called beats.

Frequent Occurrences

Between 2005 and 2009, rented single-family homes had an average of 3.7 total violations per unit while owner-occupied single-family homes had an average of 1.2 violations per unit during the same time period. Most repeat offenders were located in Areas F and G where there are higher percentages of rental property.

The most frequent code violation cases the City deals with are sanitation cases. These violations include trash on lawns, garbage cans that are not removed promptly, or other issues dealing with trash. Since 2005, there were 3,588 sanitation code violation cases investigated, making it the most common violation reported for each subdivision.

Existing Regulations and Enforcement

There are a variety of ordinances that affect residential properties. The following are an outline of some regulations the City has in place.

Property Maintenance (International Building Code 2009) – The following list are items that are part of the Property Maintenance Code that relate to property sites. Some of these items overlap other City Ordinances. The Property Maintenance Code has been in effect since 2006.

- Properties shall be maintained in a clean, safe, and sanitary condition
- Sites shall be graded to prevent erosion and water stagnation
- Sidewalks and driveways shall be kept in repair and free of hazardous conditions
- Property should be free of weeds in excess of 12-inches
- Rodents shall be properly exterminated
- Vents and other pipes/duct work shall not discharge gaseous or particulate waste beyond property lines
- Accessory structures shall be in good repair
- Inoperable vehicles may not be stored on premise
- Defacement of property is prohibited
- Swimming pools shall be properly maintained
- Structures containing more than 24-inches of water are required to have a 48" fence

There are additional requirements that relate to the safe maintenance of the exterior and interior of a structure. These requirements can be found in the International Building Code, and for brevity have not been included. These standards do require that exterior structure components be maintained safely and free of cracks or other defects.

The second most frequent violation found is Health and Safety violations which are primarily issued when grass and weeds exceed the allowable height specified in the Code of Ordinances. In this neighborhood, more than 1,600 cases were investigated between 2005 and 2009. The minimum standard set by the Code of Ordinances requires yards to be mowed and tickets are issued when lawns are over 12-inches tall across the entire yard. In Central College Station, there were five times more health and sanitation violations per rented single-family home than for owner-occupied single-family homes from 2005 to 2009 (0.96 violations/unit and 0.17 violations/unit, respectively). Overall, there were 449 violations for rented single-family and 375 violations for owner-occupied single-family.

Property maintenance cases made up only 1% of cases in this area between 2005 and 2009. Property maintenance cases are primarily focused on maintenance of the structure(s) on the property.

Code Enforcement Strategies:

The strategies for this section focus on enhancing code enforcement activity and promoting more proactive solutions-based enforcement in owner-occupied areas. These strategies are an effort to promote continued owner investment in their property by ensuring that neighboring properties are properly maintained in accordance with City regulations.

- **Ongoing evaluation and indicator program (NI2.1) -** Create an indicator system that tracks code enforcement and property maintenance activity to identify frequent violations, specific properties, and time periods. *(All Areas)*
- **Provide effective organization support and training opportunities (NI2.2) -** Incorporate code enforcement training for organizations so they can better understand local and state legal requirements for pursuing enforcement action on a property, as well as how to report and follow up on enforcement cases. *(All Areas)*
- **Increase neighborhood notification processes (NI2.3) -** Create a neighborhood oversight process to alert organizations of significant code enforcement and property maintenance activity and the outcome of the activity. (*Areas A, B, C, D, E, and F*)
- **Create proactive code enforcement procedures (NI2.4) -** Require at least annual face to face contact by Code Enforcement officers with rental property occupants to make sure occupants are aware of code requirements while living in a single-family home. Reduce use of warnings in these areas where there is no legal requirement to do so. (*Areas A, B, C, D, E, and F*)
- **Create proactive code enforcement procedures (NI2.5) -** Develop more robust property maintenance enforcement program for these areas to include specific training on the International Property Maintenance Code and cross-training with Police, Fire, and Utilities to identify issues and respond before they become a code violation. (*Areas A, B, C, D, E, and F*)
- **Create proactive code enforcement procedures (NI2.6) -** Create a proactive health and sanitation violation program to alert residents to possible future violations before enforcement to allow an opportunity to address the issues before action is necessary. A secondary focus for the program should be to evaluate why a

particular activity is occurring and identifying if there are programs or other community assistance available to ensure on-going code compliance. *(Areas A, B, C, D, E, and F)*

- **Increase neighborhood notification processes (NI2.7) -** Utilize rental registration program information to provide annual reminders to rental property residents about code requirements. Reduce use of warnings in these areas upon a second violation at the same property. *(Area G)*
- **Increase neighborhood notification processes (NI2.8) -** Utilize rental registration program information to notify property owners of significant enforcement activity occurring on their properties. *(Area G)*
- **Program Continuation (NI2.9) -** Continue neighborhood surge program to provide reminders to students and renters about responsibilities and requirements of living in a single-family home. *(All Areas – Specifically Area G)*
- **Create proactive code enforcement procedures (NI2.10) -** Work with Aggie Up organizations to reinvigorate student mediation program to allow students to work with other students about appropriate behavior and property maintenance in these areas. *(All Areas – Specifically Area G)*
- **Create proactive code enforcement procedures (NI2.11) -** Increase monitoring of properties adjacent to areas A, B, C, and D, to ensure property maintenance is not negatively impacting owner-occupied areas. *(Area G and Other Areas)*

Neighborhood Image

Neighborhood image is made up of a variety of elements like public and private landscaping, park development and maintenance, fencing, sidewalk and public facility maintenance, and signage that serve to enhance an area's aesthetic quality. These elements combine to provide a distinct image to different areas. Maintaining or improving that image is important to promoting the long-term viability of a neighborhood. Overall, these elements should work together - providing a safe and inviting public realm.

Public comments made during the planning process relating to neighborhood imagine included providing more street trees, increasing yard maintenance, better landscaping, and park development opportunities.

Image elements are located through some parts of the neighborhood with existing elements like masonry walls and streetscaping that was established with more recent subdivisions like Southwood Forest and Edelweiss Estates. Building on those elements throughout the neighborhood can strengthen the overall image of the area.

The City currently offers matching grants to partnership organizations for beautification projects like signage and landscaping. Funding is available on a semi-annual basis. A variety of factors may impact whether or not an organization takes advantage of the program. Neighborhood associations may find themselves at a disadvantage because of on-going maintenance costs associated with installing landscaping since these organizations cannot require membership in the organization. Other factors may be contributed to organizational

capacity to complete a project, lack of knowledge about developing projects that would be available for funding, or difficulties in working through the permitting process.

Neighborhood Image Strategies:

The strategies for this section are appropriate for most subdivisions within the planning area; however, their effectiveness is dependent upon successful implementation of the Effective Organizations strategies to build capacity to implement the proposed programs in this section. The focus of these strategies is primarily on assisting neighborhoods in developing and executing sustainable neighborhood image improvement projects, but also includes public investment in neighborhood image maintenance and improvements.

- **Corridor and Gateway Image Plan (NI3.1) -** Incorporate a *Neighborhood Image Corridor Improvement Plan* in coordination with the overall image corridor and gateway plan as mentioned in **Chapter 1,** Community Character with the following considerations: *(All Areas)*
  a. Landscape Plan that focuses on xeriscaping and native plantings that are tolerant to our climate and need little or no on-going irrigation;
  b. Implementation schedule should focus on aligning capital outlays to time with appropriate planting seasons;
  c. Utilization of existing resources from community partners, and assistance from neighborhood organization to reduce municipal costs;
  d. Intersection and road improvements along Deacon Drive and Rio Grande Boulevard as outlined in **Chapter 3,** Mobility; and
  e. Ongoing maintenance and ownership of improvements
- **Identify opportunities to expand funding sources (NI3.2) -** Identify and apply for funding opportunities to increase grants and matching funds available for sustainable landscaping projects. *(All Areas)*
- **Streamline City permitting processes (NI3.3) -** Streamline process for obtaining Permit for Private Improvements in Public Right-of-Way for neighborhood projects.
- **Program Continuation (NI3.4) -** Continue to provide technical assistance to neighborhoods applying for neighborhood grants. Incorporate training for organizations on developing projects that would be available for funding, and prioritize funding for projects that are in line with the improvement plan. *(All Areas)*
- **Community Partnership Opportunities (NI3.5) -** Identify and work with key community partners like Big Event, Aggie Replant, and Keep Brazos Beautiful to assist with neighborhood beautification projects. *(All Areas)*
- **Program Continuation (NI3.6) -** Continue to monitor maintenance of existing neighborhood image investments in this area through the following: *(Area A, & B)*
  o Work with organizations to make sure long-term HOA areas are being properly maintained;
  o Identify opportunities to improve sustainable landscaping practices, like xeriscaping, native planting, and irrigation; and

- o Work with organizations to apply for neighborhood grants and other funding to make landscape changes for sustainability purposes.

- **Coordinated Public Facility Investment (NI3.7) -** Where investments are being made to install new or upgraded public facilities like roads, sidewalks, and bike lanes, neighborhood service areas should be incorporated into the prioritization process for funding. Where possible, thoroughfare improvements should incorporate context elements outline in the City's Comprehensive Plan. *(Areas A, B, C, D, and E)*

- **Coordinated Public Facility Maintenance (NI3.8) -** Develop an increased monitoring program for public facilities like drainage ways, sidewalks, and roads and prioritize improvements to owner-occupied areas except in the case of imminent health and safety issues. *(Areas A, B, C, D, and E)*

- **Identify opportunities to expand funding sources (NI3.9)** Identify grant and other funding opportunities to improve safety and aesthetics of drainage channels. This would include aesthetic improvements to safety features at street level (i.e., guardrails) as well as other improvements outlined in **Chapter 1,** Community Character relating to floodplain and drainage. (Areas A, B, C, D, and E)

- **Provide Technical Support for New Neighborhood Programs (NI3.10) -** Work with organizations to develop neighborhood improvement projects to repair fences, drainage ways, signs, and other neighborhood image elements. *(Area C, D, E, & F)*

- **Provide Technical Support for New Neighborhood Programs (NI3.11) -** Develop neighborhood clean-up program with Sanitation, Recycling, and neighborhood organizations to encourage active neighborhood participation in maintaining and improving neighborhood image. The program should include a once-a-year event that brings neighborhood together to improve the overall image of the neighborhood. Such a program could be done in conjunction with Big Event, Earth Day, or other events that capitalize on partnerships with other community organizations. *(Area C, D, E, & F)*

Emergency and Law Enforcement Services

The final section of this chapter deals with the coordination and improvement of law enforcement and emergency service response in the planning area. The primary concerns raised by residents relate to noise and on-street parking. This section also includes information about property security which is often an issue throughout College Station.

Noise

Noise complaints are an issue throughout College Station. Central College Station is no different, with loud party and music complaints falling in the top ten most frequent activities from Police reporting. The City prohibits loud noises when heard outside the structure in which they occur, or beyond the property where the noise takes place higher than 65 decibels from 7am to 10pm and 55 decibels from 10 pm to 7 am. Included in these regulations are loud noises coming from cars. Noise complaints have held relatively stable in the Central College Station neighborhood for the past five years, with an average of 253

calls per year.

The City currently participates as a partner in the Aggie Up Noise Abatement Class offered through Student Services at TAMU. This program is a day-long course aimed at educating students who receive tickets about appropriate behavior, applicable laws and regulations, and making positive decisions in the future. Classes are held monthly and can be used for deferred adjudication for the ticket on first time offenses. Students are still held accountable for the violation but can have the violation removed from their criminal record. Currently, classes are operating at capacity and monitoring of class size and waiting lists should be on-going to identify if more resources are necessary to the program.

On-street parking

Excessive on-street parking was a concern voiced by many residents during the planning process. Often on-street parking problems are due to the prevalence of rental property in the area. On-street parking can cause difficulties when cars block driveways, trash cans, and mailboxes, but particularly when emergency vehicles have difficulty accessing the area.

Because of the lack of sidewalks on many local streets, especially in older areas of the neighborhood, on-street parking has forced pedestrians and bicycles to walk and ride with through traffic. However, there are very few parking complaint calls made to the Police department for this area. However, in 2009, there was a 329% increase from 2008 and 158% increase from 2005. (See **Figure 2.1, Parking Complaints** for numbers)

Figure 2.1
Parking Complaints

Year	Incidents
2009	103
2008	24
2005	40

Source: COCS Police

On-street parking does, however, have benefits. Parked cars are a method of traffic calming. Because they visually crowd the through lanes, drivers will typically slow down and pay better attention to the road and the surrounding cars. Additionally in a more suburban environment like Central College Station, it provides for guest parking for gatherings that would otherwise not be available if on-street parking were removed.

Existing Regulations:

The City of College Station allows parking on all local streets unless otherwise signed. College Station local streets must currently be constructed with 27-foot pavement width which can accommodate two-way traffic with parking. All Central College Station local streets are built to this standard. City streets are public property and open to the public for parking. Parked cars may not be located within 20-feet of street intersections or be parked facing the wrong direction. Parked cars may not block a driveway, mailbox, dumpster, or alley, and parking is not permitted on bike lanes or yards. Parking can be removed by action of the City Council through the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program.

Because of the difficulties that are incurred by residents when on-street parking is removed within an area, on-street parking should not be removed in this area unless there is an impact to emergency service response times or accessibility to fire hydrants. Continued monitoring of the parking situation would allow for more proactive response to parking issues within the neighborhood. Sidewalks and bicycle lane improvements outlined in **Chapter 3**, Mobility should be made to provide safe routes for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Property Security

Property security is a concern in many college communities because of the seasonal effects of school breaks that leave a large number of homes empty, creating easy targets for break-ins and burglary. Burglaries of a vehicle or habitation are a consistent issue throughout the community. In Central College Station, burglaries have been increasing since 2007.

Figure 2.2
Burglary & Theft Activity

Year	Incidents
2009	399
2008	387
2005	446

Source: COCS Police

In 2009, the majority of burglaries and thefts occurred on Airline Drive, Austin Avenue, Brothers Boulevard, Longmire Drive, Navarro Drive, Pierre Place, Todd Trail, and Welsh Avenue. These streets are home to multi-family units, or directly adjacent to those units. **Figure 2.2**, Burglary and Theft Activity, illustrates the overall reported burglary and theft activity in the area.

College Station Police implemented a community policing system in 2009, where officers are assigned to beats, and work closely with residents and organizations to identify and address security issues.

Emergency and Law Enforcement Services Strategies:

The strategies in this section are focused on improving outreach and education through neighborhood and student organizations about property security and emergency response to ensure appropriate response times and effective law enforcement.

- **Program Continuation (NI4.1) -** Continue to promote community policing and provide opportunities for residents to interact with police personnel about security issues around the neighborhood.
- **Provide effective organization support and training opportunities (NI4.2) -** Increase education to neighborhoods and student organizations about property crimes and security during school breaks.
- **Provide Technical Support for New Neighborhood Programs (NI4.3) -** Utilize Know Your Neighbor campaigns to ensure that residents know who lives around them and can more easily identify suspicious activity.
- **Provide Technical Support for New Neighborhood Programs (NI4.4) -** Work with established organizations to develop or reinstate neighborhood watch or other neighborhood policing programs that would create opportunities for organizations to assist law enforcement and emergency responders.
- **Ongoing evaluation and indicator program (NI4.5) -** Develop an

on-going parking monitoring program in conjunction with the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program and emergency responders to monitor on-street parking issues and take proactive actions to address issues. This program should set up regularly scheduled review of parking in owner-occupied areas by visual inspection and tracking of parking complaints.

- **Program Continuation (NI4.6)** Continue to work with Aggie Up and student organizations to educate students about noise, parking, and property security.
- **Program Continuation (NI4.7)** Continue notifications to registered neighborhood organizations of noise violations and police response; incorporate notifications of other significant police activity so that neighborhoods may focus their neighborhood watches on particular areas.
- **Ongoing evaluation and indicator program (NI4.8) -** Develop nuisance monitoring and enforcement programs in line with state and local requirements.
- **Expand Neighborhood Grant opportunities (NI4.9) -** Amend neighborhood grant program to include funding for neighborhood watch programs for signage, or incidental costs.
- **Increase neighborhood notification processes (NI4.10) -** Increase notifications to property owners about noise violations and other significant activity on a property.
- **Program Continuation (NI4.11) -** Continue to support the Aggie Up Noise Abatement class. Work with Municipal Court to track rates of recidivism to evaluate efficacy of the program.
- **Program Continuation (NI4.12) -** When staffing allows, continue to utilize police "party patrols" especially during game, back to school, and end of semester weekends to monitor and address noise and other illegal activity during time periods with frequent parties.